

## PROBLEMS IN THE CHECKOUT LINE

often in the supermarket checkout lines  
the cashier will ask me,  
"how are you doing?"  
and often I'll answer something  
like, "not so good, I've got  
hemorrhoids, insomnia and vertigo, also  
the battery in my watch has  
stopped...."

there's never any response, it's as if  
they haven't heard, they just go on  
ringing up my purchases.

I am not attempting to project my  
frustrations upon supermarket  
employees  
but when they ask me,  
"how are you doing?"  
I'm usually not doing very  
well and there's nothing that  
makes me feel worse  
than to say,  
"fine."

I've tried it the other way.  
when they ask,  
"how are you doing?"  
I say, "god, it's never been so  
good! it's unbelievable, the money's  
just rolling in! I don't understand  
it!"

but they seem to dislike this one  
more than the  
hemorrhoid, insomnia, vertigo  
bit.

I've even tried another way.  
when they ask that same question  
I say,  
"you really don't care."

again there's no response, they  
just go on  
ringing up my purchases  
but I rather get their answer:  
they really don't care.  
I think that's nice.  
we all ought to know this, it's  
nothing to be ashamed of  
and it makes the buying of  
groceries



just about the same as  
anything else:  
all we need is what we want and  
what we want  
has very little to do  
with anything  
else.

#### I'M A FAILURE

I locked my car door  
and looked up and this  
guy walked up  
he looked like my old  
friend Peter  
but he wasn't Peter  
he was this gaunt gringo  
in blue workshirt and jeans  
and he said,  
"hey, man, my wife and I  
need something to eat, we  
want to go to a Kentucky Fried  
Chicken, o.k.?"  
I looked over on the sidewalk  
and here was his fat Mexican  
woman  
and she stared at me  
her eyes near  
tears.  
I gave him a five.  
"I love you, man!" he  
hollered, "I'm not going to  
spend it for drink."  
"why not?" I answered,  
"I would...."

I went into a building  
took care of some business  
came out  
got into my car  
as always  
contemplating about  
whether I had given  
properly  
or been taken  
properly.

as I drove off  
I remembered my years on the  
bum  
starved damn near beyond repair  
I had never asked for a  
dime.